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A N

E P I S T L E

T O

Mr. Thomas Elrington,

Occasion'd by the *K*

M U R D E R

O F T H E

Tragedy of *C A T O*

Last Monday Night.



Printed in the Year 1730.





A N
E P I S T L E
T O

Mr. Thomas Elrington.

“ **T**O wake the Soul by tender Stroaks of Art,
“ To raise the Genious and to mend the
Heart,
CATO was wrote : But thou hast since de-
sign'd,

(a) By him to tickle, stab, or Pall Mankind.
O! had the Hero, when he fell for *Rome*,
Ev'r thought, by thee, he'd meet a second Doom,
His patient Hand had never struck the Blow ;
But bought a speedy Death amidst the Foe.
Muses! thou soft, relenting, bounteous Throng,
Who deck such Mortals Lips with Tragick Song ;

(a) *Alluding to the many Blunders throughout the
Action.*

Make

Make virtuous CATO once again thy Care,
 And whisper Verse propitious in mine Ear;
 Once more he'll rise to guard the *Latian Age*,
 (b) And, by a *Turkish Tyrant Caesar's Rage*,
 Become a butcher'd Victim to *Hibernia's Stage*. }

The Curtain rising first our Sight was grac'd,
 With well tun'd Sons to cultivate our Taste:

(c) *Portius* sings forth an Emblem of the Day,

(At least the Murder of a Well wrought Play,
 Whilst *Marcus* in a strong superior Stile,

(d) Labour'd to teach us to lament, (or smile:)

But where's the wonder Wit shou'd lose its Worth,
 When from such impious Tongues it fallies forth:

Grim *Faustus* rises in a virtuous Shape;

Then how can Laws of Virtue hope t'scape:

And yet, I fear, to penetrate the Jest,

The Part of *Dummy* suits his Genius best.

The next new Scene which you expos'd to view,

(e) *Rome's* mocking Sires appear'd, A beardless Crew!
 And like contrary Objects much in Vogue,

(f) The purest Man is term'd the greatest Rogue.

(b) *I suppose Mr. Elrington took this Part in Opposition to Julius Caesar, to shew his Accomplishments both in Passion and Gravity, but, I fear upon Examination he overdid it.*

(c) *The useful Member of the Society who perform'd Portius, is valued upon Speaking, (or tuning) blank Verse: yet in his part of Faustus, being always dumb, he has gain'd a much larger Stock of Applause.*

(d) *This Representative being so near in kindred to his Brother in the Drama, could not chuse but draw some Tears or Smiles, from Spectators; some upon reflection of the Ruin of the glorious Piece: and others upon Imagination they beheld Comedy.*

(e) *Alluding to the young Underlings who sat as Senators,*

(f) *Mr. Husband, a Gentleman to be admir'd for Sobriety, and Virtue, considering his Profession, who play'd the part of Sempronius.*

(g) But

(g) But Oh! when I survey'd thy pompous State,
 Whose gaudy Dress so well menac'd thy Fate;
 My loathing Breast renew'd reluctance found,
 And obvious felt th' expiring Hero's Wound.

Varanes and *Orestes* there take Place,
 And *Alexander* smiles in *CATO's* Face:
 Thus diff'rent Heroes in one Shape engage,
 Whilst Kings and Princes make a *Roman* Sage.

(h) *Juba* with *Oroonoko's* Garb dispense,
 And *Tartar*, *Timur*, makes *Numidia's* Prince.
 Thus have I seen amidst the gaping Crowd,
 A Merry-Andrew obstinately proud;

Whose various Drolls, on each surviving Night,
 Allur'd the Rabble, and amaz'd the Sight:
 Clown, Cocker, Soldier, Fop, or *Indian* Slave,
 One Coat of Patches still adorn'd the Knave.
 But to proceed and sound my conqu'rous Praise,
 (For that shall be the Subject of those Lays)

Tho' thou great *Tom*, prescrib'd the Peoples Laws,
 And loudly bellow'd out the *Roman* Cause,

(i) Yet broke a Speech; to shew thy Tide of Wit,
 In mighty Dudgeon, ran to weed the Pit:

(g) Mr. Erlington's grand Appearance, which tower'd so high above the Figure he then represented, the Parts of *Alexander*, *Varanes*, and *Orestes*, &c. being perform'd in the same dress: and no doubt if this Proves not a caution, he may wear it in the part of *Julius Cæsar*.

(h) The part of *Juba* was play'd in the same Shape us'd in *Oroonoko* and *Tamerlane*, without any regard to the Countries, Times, or Customs of the different People: Not that I have any thing to say against the Performance of Mr. Delane, who play'd his part to Admiration.

(i) Our Patriot, in the Senate Debates being enraged to see a little extraordinary Tricks of *Monikee* in the Pit, started from his Chair to drive her out, which added a particular Lustre to the Play.

There

There brazen *Mon*,— amidst a Crow'd of Beaus
 (Whose ready Genious still surrounds their Cloaths)
 Viewing the jealous Patriot's stern Surmise,
 Round to the Stage midst Pails of Claps she flies :
 There on each penn'd up Nymph, and Damon waits,
 Nor fears great *Tom*, his Senate, nor his Threats.
 But now my Muse begins to waft and Soar,
 (k) Sneers at some Faults, and slips a thousand more ;
 Skips from the Second Act, and in the last,
 Ne'er thinks of rude Mistakes, nor Blunders past :
 But in her hov'ring Curvats, Frisks, and Flights,
 On weeping *Portius* she victorious lights :
 There stands aghast, as in a doubtful Maze ;
 Kindling each Sense, fans up a ravish'd Blaze :
 The tortur'd Youth, methinks, despairing cries,
 " CATO has fall'n upon his Sword, and dies ;
 " His weeping Servants, losing all Defence,
 " Obsequious to his Orders, bear him hence.
 (l) But ah ! amid'st their fond industrious Care,
 Each ran confus'd, to seek thy Elbow Chair ;
 But thou thou who'd scorn such Aid to grace thy Fall,
 With hasty Strides shot to the Senate Hall :
 And whilst each Eye threw many a gloomy Cast,
 Sunk with a Sultan's Spleen to breath thy last .

(k) Not thinking it worth while to insert all the frivolous Alterations, and Blunders committed, not forgetting our friend Decius.

(l) The Servants were so stupified with their Storming, Scolding Master, they neglected bringing in the Chair to expire in, which oblig'd the haughty, (or rather unnatural) Cato, to run from his Couch, to that which supported him when studying Plato. And I should be ungrateful, if I did not speak so much in the Praise of the Gentleman, that he gave up Life, amidst as much Spleen, as if he were Bajazet, instead of Cato,

Then

Then rising stiff with supplicating Tone,
 Once more invok'd the Gods with hideous Groan;
 And mocking all the Grimly Starts of Death,
 Fell back and snor'd the last of *Cato's* Breath.
 Then as the Curtain all the Prospect marr'd,
CATO tho' doubly murder'd disappear'd.!

The Godlike *Addison's* immortal Hand,
 Whence all those Beauties in one Center stand,
 Instructive Lines! Where Freedom's Ardor glows,
 And probing Thoughts from each Expression flows;
 O! had he liv'd till present Days to see
 His liberal Precepts, stain'd and soil'd by thee,
 Dulness like Thine would sure surround his Brain,
 No more his boundless Thoughts such Plots contain, }
 But tracing Tragic Dramas, term his Labours vain. }

N. B. I hope Mr. *Vanderbank* will excuse me that I
 did not mention his extraordinary Compliment to Mr.
Elrington in his Part of *Sir Roger* in the *What--d--ye--call*
--it.

Your unknown trusty Friend,

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